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*Americans. An Impression.* By ALEXANDER FRANCIS. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1909. Pp. xi+256.

Part of this book was written in America, the remainder in England. It was revised in Russia, and the preface is dated Calcutta. The chapters appeared first in the *London Times*. The dedication is to a former representative of the United States at the Russian Court. The author was for many years in charge of the English church at St. Petersburg.

This combination of circumstances furnishes an interesting background to the reader who turns to the titles of the nineteen chapters in the contents: "The National Temper," "America and England," "Natives and Aliens," "The Making of Americans," "The Jews," "Racial Prejudices," nine chapters on "Social Settlements and Education," four on "Social Discontent," "Socialism," "Democracy," and "Social Progress."

The author is a thoroughgoing idealist and in many places deprecates empirical, and, as he considers them, materialistic tendencies. Yet he frequently illustrates in his treatment of his material the limiting influence of custom and environment. He never forgets the relation of America to England, and is apt to judge elements and contributions other than of English origin by their conformity or lack of conformity to the original type. He recognizes that the fusion now going on may result in the production of a higher type, but in each case studied his primary interest seems to lie in determining what has become of the original elements. Thus among the Russian Jews the custom of early marriage as a means of preserving young people from illicit sexual relations becomes practically impossible in America because of economic conditions. The author seems to look upon the change as an evil, and does not take account of the unfortunate conditions which accompany the practice. What seems to impress him most in the social life of the settlements is the fact that here they form "new conventions which impose restraints." There is no question of the value of these conventions and restraints, but one feels that the author would enter better into the life he has observed if he could take more account of the equally important factor of initiative in social, moral, and religious life, which represents intelligence as the other factor represents instinct and habit.

This difficulty appears in the discussion of religion in connection with the settlements and the schools. The classic and established is much more clearly religious to the author than is the reconstructive and changing. The American home would spoil the children were it not for the discipline of the schools; and now the schools, between self-government schemes, elective courses, and feminization, are in danger of destroying the virility which has been America's safeguard. The rule of the schools is "impersonal and invariable," "as domestic rule should be." This condition includes all advantages—there are none left for the relationships of the newer type which are developing in American life and, more slowly, in European life. One must admit that these more democratic relationships are being brought about with considerable waste, but the more "impersonal and invariable" rule is not entirely free from similar loss.

The older system which is cited in Williams College as having had twenty-seven religious services a week, sixteen of these compulsory, is not entirely commended, yet its aim is described as being "to make the human will as a

strong house, barred and bolted, that could withstand every blast of any storm. Now, the aim is to protect the house, as by a forest on which the fury of the storm shall be spent."

There is no doubt that Americans use means such as the "forest" more than do some other peoples; but is this not in itself an evidence of will and power? I believe that the resourceful American youth of today will not suffer on the whole in comparison with his European cousin or his New England great grandfather. Even the author is impressed by the effectiveness of the self-supporting college student; it is possible that he makes too much of this phase of college life, and does not sufficiently recognize its limitations.

There is a good index in the book, so that one is able to locate topics easily and to judge of the extent to which particular subjects are discussed. Some of these are very interesting. There is a comment on the schools: "Written work is rarely called for, and slovenliness characterizes such of it as there is." A German who spent some time in American schools just before the visit of Mr. Francis complained of the excess of written work he found there. The American and English voices are compared "to the undoubted advantage of the English in inflection and pitch. In pronunciation, however, the American seemed to me to excel in distinctness and the Englishman in distinction. . . . The superior distinctness of the American is due, I suppose, to conscious efforts, as the superior distinction of the Englishman is due to habitual and unconscious ease, in conforming, each in his measure, to the standard which educated persons in both countries, even in America, accept."

There is not space to go into the race problem and other social questions which are treated here with much clearness. The reader will find much that is helpful in the sections on college athletics, the Rhodes scholarships, fraternities, and many other topics.

FRANK A. MANNY

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

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*The Mental Man: An Outline of the Fundamentals of Psychology.* By GUSTAV GOTTLIEB WENZLAFF. New York: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1909. Pp. 272. \$1.10.

This is a concise little book in general elementary psychology, which emphasizes the functional point of view of mental life. The book belongs to the better class of normal-school textbooks and aims to give a comprehensive rather than an intensive treatment of the subject-matter. The material included is, as a rule, selected from modern writers of recognized reputation and consequently the book contains many valuable and helpful references.

Aside from the topics usually treated in works on general psychology the author includes chapters on "Heredity," "Unexplained Mental Phenomena," "Mental Types and Characters," and many references to abnormal and pathological phases of mental activity. The author believes that "psychology is not a logic, describing and explaining the processes of correct and fallacious thinking; nor a discussion merely of apperception, or the manner in which knowledge is acquired and expanded; nor merely a laboratory handbook of psycho-physical measurements; but psychology is a science that should also show us the mind